

Newsletter

June 2019



A weaver from Varansi, Uttar Pradesh using the Fly shuttle to insert wefts in a kadhua brocade saree.



HIMADRI HANS HANDLOOM

- Extra Weft Weaving
- Multi Shaft Weaving
- Hand Knitting

Almora, Uttarakhand

The Hans Foundation supports charitable and social development programs by providing support to local non-governmental organizations. The interventions implemented by the foundation ranges from grassroot level to national level programs.

Himadri Hans Handloom is an initiative of The Hans Foundation which began with a few local women of the Almora district in Uttarakhand. The objective of this setup was to facilitate women empowerment and revive the dying art of weaving in the hills. They hold a Fair Trade accreditation too.

Today they have two weaving centers, where almost 180 women work on spinning, drafting, weaving, hand knitting and finishing, etc. Artisans come everyday to these centers through buses provided by the foundation.

Designs are developed in-house by design experts. The women then weave or knit the final products on fibers/yarns of pure Cashmere, Alpaca, Lambs wool, Merino, Hemp, Nettle, Silk, Cotton Bamboo, etc. Each one conducts the day's work in coordination with the master weaver and the supervisor.

Their products include a range of apparel items and accessories including shawls, stoles, socks, scarves, blankets, tablemats, throws, runners, curtains and running fabric. They have recently introduced a range of home furnishing and lifestyle too.





SEWA INTERNATIONAL

- Handloom Brocade Weaving
Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh
- Pakko Embroidery
- Bandhini
Kutch, Gujarat

Sewa International is a not-for-profit organization inspired by the noble Indian tradition of Service before Self, working since 1997 towards building capacity and capability of individuals. They also work with non-profit organizations to empower communities and artisans through sustained support. Their women empowerment skilling program, running since 2007 in the Kutch district of Gujarat, has resulted in strengthening of women who are either working for Sewa International or independently running their own business as tailors and embroiderers. In 2015, they launched their flagship program, 'Kashi-to-Kutch' for empowering Kutchi women artisans excelling in embroidery/Bandhini crafts, combined with the fine art of delicate fabric making by Kashi weavers.

Sewa International works by building grass-root connections with the villagers through its volunteers and conducts surveys/meetings to understand the local issues. This is followed by formation of village-level community structures

like SHGs. Gaps in skills and knowledge are identified and appropriate training is imparted to selected artisans through its Entrepreneurship Development Program and Technical Training Program. Once the trainees are certified and ready for producing marketable goods, they are provided with the option to join Sewa International as tailors/embroiderers or are linked with the local merchants to promote entrepreneurship among them.

For facilitating market linkages, they also participate in exhibitions, art and crafts fairs across the country like Dilli Haat, Crafts Mela by Dastakari Haat Samiti, Surajkund Mela, USTAD by Ministry of Minority Affairs and many others.

They create a wide range of bags (jhola, clutch, laptop, purse, wallet, mobile cover), stoles, dupattas, kurtis with finest embroidery and bandhini work on handloom weaves.





GVCS

- Applique
Barmer, Rajasthan

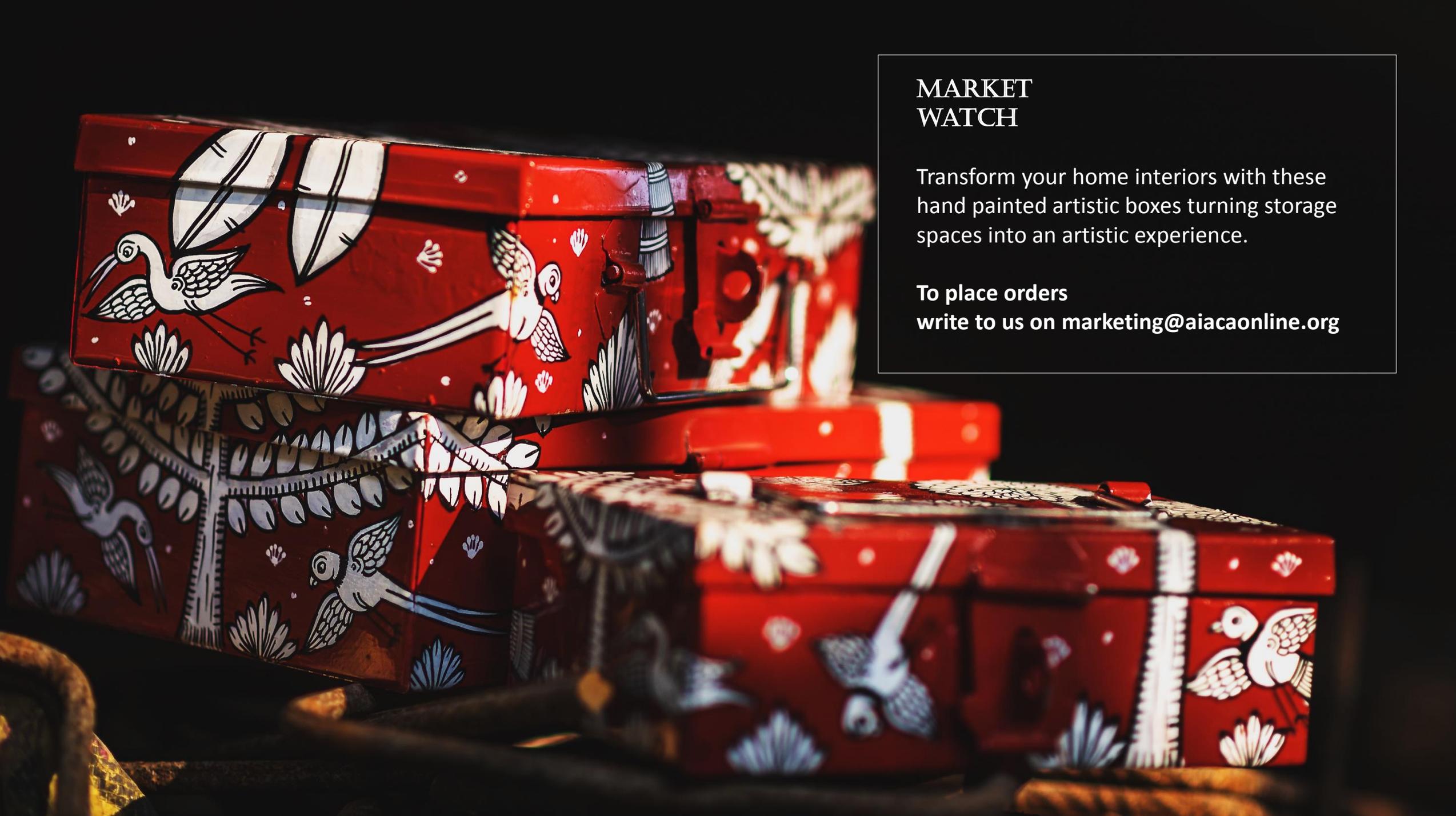
Gramin Vikas Evam Chetna Sansthan (GVCS) is a grassroots organization working in the Barmer district since 1998 and registered under the Rajasthan State Societies Act, 1958. They aim at working towards the empowerment of women artisans through the formation of Self-Help Groups (SHGs).

The traditional technique of applique'/patchwork is used to develop beautiful products to cater to the demand of the urban market. GVCS has set up a network of more than 10000 artisans through the formation of SHGs. The traditional craft of hand applique' involves layering of fabric, stenciling, cutting slits through the design pattern, superimposing the cut fabric onto base fabric using guar gum and hand stitching the slit design using hemming to form an intricate piece. The artisans of GVCS are trained and equipped in developing high quality products. The organization also has an in-house workshop for training

and skill development of artisans and new design development. With a huge production capacity they are well equipped to deliver products as per the stipulated timeline by the buyers. The profits earned are ploughed back in community development work.

They make a wide range of hand applique' and embroidered home furnishings, bed covers, cushion covers, table covers and curtains.



The image shows a stack of several rectangular boxes, likely made of wood or cardboard, painted in a vibrant red color. Each box is intricately hand-painted with white and black designs. The primary motif is a stylized bird, possibly a crane or heron, with long necks and wings, depicted in various poses. Interspersed among the birds are floral patterns, including lotus-like flowers and leafy sprigs. The background of the boxes is a deep red, and the overall aesthetic is traditional and artistic. The boxes are stacked, with the top one being the most prominent and in sharp focus, while the others recede into a dark, shadowed background.

MARKET WATCH

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GOING GREEN

Tapas Jana
Paschim Medinipur,
West Bengal

Tapas Jana is a master artisan from Sarta, West Bengal who at a tender age learnt the craft of masland (traditional floor mats from West Bengal) from his father Late Mr. Pashupati Jana. His designs are unique and intricate that brings out the natural look of the grass. He also specializes in making naturally dyed mats. He is a state awardee in the craft and his wife Gauri Jana, is a national awardee (2012).

Madur Kathi is a locally found grass, growing in marshy barren lands of Mednipur, West Bengal. It is a natural fibre which requires very little processing to be used as a raw material. The grass when harvested is washed in plain water, sun dried and sliced using a simple knife, before being dyed. Often it is used in its natural form and color. Keeping the tradition of natural dyeing alive, Tapas Jana has setup a dyeing unit in his own backyard. While weaving, to soften the grass, it needs to be

soaked in water and further sliced with teeth. The grass is used in weft, whereas warps being used are of pure cotton. For Madur Kathi weaving, two weavers work simultaneously and it is their rhythm that matters. Once complete the mat is edge-finished and rolled. No post processing or washing is required.

Although the hand woven Madurkathi art pieces are rarer to find and difficult to sell in a price sensitive market scenario, he continues to make artistic masland designs in the traditional manner to keep the craft alive. He has also trained about 50 girls and women from the adjacent villages to prevent the craft from fading.

He makes beautiful table mats, floor mats, table runners, curtains and wall hangings from Madur Kathi.

